DOCUMENT RESUME

ED 230 530 SP 022 360

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TITLE Florida's Teacher Education Centers: Determining If They Make a Difference.
PUB DATE Nov 82
NOTE 25p.; Paper presented at the National Inservice Conference of the National Council of States on Inservice Education (7th, Atlanta, GA, November 19-23, 1982).
PUB TYPE Speeches/Conference Papers (150) -- Reports - Descriptive (141)

EDRS PRICE MF01/PC01 Plus Postage.
DESCRIPTORS Change Agents; Elementary Secondary Education; *Evaluation Criteria; *Inservice Teacher Education; *Program Evaluation; *Research Proposals; School Districts; Staff Development; State Aid; *State Programs; Statewide Planning; *Teacher Centers
IDENTIFIERS *Florida

ABSTRACT

A description is given of the format and function of a projected state-mandated evaluation of the Florida Teacher Education Center (TEC) system, a governance structure which coordinates the design, implementation, and evaluation of inservice teacher education programs in Florida's 67 school districts. The organization, program, and financing of the statewide TEC system is described, and the factors that influenced the comprehensive process-product-impact evaluation are discussed. The purpose of the evaluation is discussed: (1) to further clarify the purposes of the TEC; (2) to provide detailed information about implementation; and (3) to evaluate the extent to which the purposes have been achieved. Other main questions to be addressed in the evaluation are also noted: (1) Is the TEC Model functional for all districts? (2) Does the TEC Model produce personnel more able to perform effectively on the job? and (3) What revisions in educational staff development programs are needed? Also discussed are the roles of members of the evaluation team, which will collect, analyze, and synthesize existing data; design and distribute a survey questionnaire; and conduct onsite interviews and observations. (JD)

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FLORIDA'S TEACHER EDUCATION CENTERS:

DETERMINING IF THEY MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Presentation

National Council of States

on Inservice Education

Seventh Annual

National Inservice Conference

November 19-23, 1982

Atlanta, Georgia

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FLORIDA'S TEACHER EDUCATION CENTERS:

DETERMINING IF THEY MAKE A DIFFERENCE

Given almost a decade of inservice staff development programs delivered through the Florida Teacher Education Center (TEC) system, the Legislature, Department of Education, universities, and citizens of the State of Florida have determined that a study be conducted to ascertain the effectiveness of this model. The main questions to be asked include:

1. Is the Teacher Education Center Model functional for all districts?

2. Does the TEC Model produce personnel more able to perform effectively on the job?

3. What revisions in educational staff development programs are needed?

The Florida Teacher Education Center Model

It has been documented by Dr. Jay Lutz and Dr. James Parris that there are presently over 4,500 teacher centers in operation in America. They cite one of the reasons for this wide spread interest in teacher centers is their flexibility and variety. Within this variety, three general and fundamentally different types of teacher education centers exist. Centers in Florida belong to the third type as described below.

The first type of center, usually referred to as an "informal teacher center," is formed by groups of teachers, teacher organizations, private foundations, or school district. In these centers, teachers gather together on a voluntary basis to share ideas and often to construct classroom materials for the dual

purpose of fellowship and professional development.

The second type, generally referred to as a "professional teacher center," is also a single-agency center. It is formed by subject-matter professional organizations, e.g., math or reading associations, or by groups of teachers concerned primarily with one subject. In these centers, members of the professional organization exchange ideas, participate in workshop activities, and occasionally formulate policy recommendations for their state or national affiliate.

The third type of center is referred to as a "collaborative teacher education center" and is built upon efforts among existing agencies. This multi-agency center is designed to deliver consortium-based teacher education programs which are planned, implemented, and evaluated by school districts, community representatives, institutions of higher learning, and classroom teachers. The concept of a collaborative teacher education center is based on the assumption that the quality of teacher education can be significantly improved through the collaborative efforts of the individuals and institutions involved in the teacher training process. Teacher education centers in Florida belong to this third type.

To understand and envision the Florida TEC Model, some background information and history are necessary. It will be of benefit to know about the evolution of the Florida Master Inservice Program. It will also be of help to understand the events that have led to the present TEC legislation.

Master Inservice Program

Florida Statutes were amended in 1968 to provide that school boards develop comprehensive plans for staff development. This amendment provided that inservice staff development be given the highest

priority in the expenditure of the Education Improvement Expense funds. State Board Regulations provided that effective participation in a district program shall entitle a member of the instructional staff to extend his/her certificate provided that:

a. the district school board adopt a master plan for inservice; and

b. the plan is submitted to the Department of Education for approval.

On August 4, 1969, the Commissioner of Education established teacher education as one of the major priorities of the Department of Education. This priority included preparation programs in colleges and universities, workshops, and inservice programs conducted in school districts. The present priority of teacher education has been reaffirmed annually as a major priority. The concept of the priority has been expanded to include all district personnel.

Florida's Inservice Staff Development Program has emerged to a level where one can review a single document which describes the local district or participating agency's entire inservice staff development program which displays inservice activities for all district employees from all fund sources. Florida is presently the only state with a state-wide network of teacher education centers providing a governance system for the inservice program for it's 67 school districts.

For some time the public and educators have been stating that the best way to bring about constructive changes in education, as in in any other vocation, is to bring about change in the way our personnel perform their assigned duties. In accomplishing this it is very important that a comprehensive and systematic framework

of inservice activities be established which are carried on throughout the career of all educational personnel.

State policy requires that the 67 school districts and other participating agencies develop a comprehensive program of staff development for all instructional personnel designed to assist each member in improving and maintaining their knowledge, skills and attitudes.

The Master Inservice Plan (MIP) provides the legal basis for the district inservice program. The MIP enhances the provision of inservice education in two ways. It provides 1) an extremely flexible and responsive approach to meeting district staff needs, and 2) an alternative way to extend the validity period of a teaching certificate.

Teacher Education Center Legislation

During 1972, the idea of Florida teacher education centers arose from discussions between members of legislative education committees and Department of Education personnel. The state teachers' organization was soon involved in planning legislation for teacher education centers. School districts and universities also made their interests known. Each of these groups had institutional interests at stake in the legislative outcome.

The Florida Teacher Education Center Act, which emerged in 1973, established a legal basis for the development of a state-wide system of teacher education centers and sponsored a new form of institutional cooperation. This legislation gave new shape and meaning to teacher education in Florida. The following passages from the Act illustrate the intent and scope of the legislation.

> The purposes of this Act are to declare a new state policy for the education of teachers . . . .

> The most important influence the school can contribute to the learning of any student is the attitudes, skills, knowledge, and understanding of the teacher.
>
> Teachers can best assist with improving education when they participate in identifying needed changes and in designing, developing, implementing, and evaluating solutions to meet the identified needs.
>
> The education of teachers is inherently a career long process. Effective July 1, 1973, the responsibility for operating programs for preservice and inservice teacher education is assigned jointly to the colleges and universities, to the district school boards, and to the teaching profession . . . .

A Statewide System - Organization and Program

The TEC Act recognizes that reform in teacher education requires acknowledgement that the process of education of teachers is career long and that collaboration among universities, school districts, and the teaching profession is necessary. Personally, I like to think of the collaborative process as the vehicle for governing teacher center programs. This governance structure provides for shared decision-making when planning, implementing, and evaluating teacher center programs. Involvement of representatives of the three partners in teacher education in this decision-making process so that equality of influence exists, for each partner is an essential element of collaboration and is necessary to a successful TEC program.

The collaborative process is enhanced in Florida's TEC's through legislative requirements. These mandates provide that each center

will have a council of at least nine members representative of all groups with classroom teachers holding a majority membership.

Four responsibilities of the local council are mandated by the TEC Act. These are:

1. to recommend policy and procedures for the TEC;

2. to develop goals and objectives for the center within the policies as determined by the local school board;

3. to recommend the employment of an appropriate teacher education center staff; and

4. to make recommendations on an appropriate budget.

It is the responsibility of the local school board to act upon these recommendations and to provide appropriate and adequate facilities for the operation of the center. Florida Statutes define "center" to mean the headquarter's location and the preservice and inservice teacher training activities carried out in a school district in a teacher education center.

This definition of a center mandates that a TEC be different from a center as envisioned by many advocates of teacher centers. As you are aware, a teacher center in many areas of our nation indicates a physical location of the "make and take" variety as well as other inservice and curriculum activities take place. In Florida, most inservice activities occur at the school site.

Teacher education centers are not buildings or specific places where teachers meet for training. Nor are they solely for classroom teachers since other educators are eligible to participate in

the center programs. Thus, Florida's teacher education centers are not strictly "teacher centers" but are the governance structures which coordinate the designing, implementing, and evaluating of teacher education programs in school districts. Considerable emphasis has been given within the state to the fact that teacher education centers are a concept rather than a specific location. It is true, however, that several TEC's have acquired a facility which may be used as a professional learning area and where some activities of the centers are conducted.

The program of a teacher education center must include at least the following:

1. an assessment of inservice education as perceived by classroom teachers, school district personnel and university personnel.

2. programs developed to meet these identified inservice needs.

3. provision of resources, both human and material, for the inservice programs which have been developed.

4. provision of resources and experiences for clinical preservice programs based on assessed needs.

5. facilitation of entry or reentry of persons into the teaching profession.

6. facilitation of training processes which are based on assessed needs, the development of experiences to meet those needs, and the evaluation of the extent to which the needs are met.

7. to facilitate internal and external evaluation of the program.

Teacher education center programs are to be approved by the Department of Education in accordance with appropriate procedures. Any program can be initiated by a center which is planned to satisy a district inservice need and which meets the requirements of state board of education rules for teacher education.

There are presently 45 teacher education centers in Florida, five of which are multi-district centers representing 27 school districts, and 40 single district centers. All nine state universities participate in the centers as collaborating partners, as well as five private institutions1

A Statewide System - Finance

At the school district level, staff development funding is an integral part of the Florida Education Finance Program (FEFP). From 1968-73, the funding of staff development was done through a source known as Education Improvement Expense funds. It was intended that EIE would give first priority to staff development through the Master Plan for Inservice Education. There was no attempt, however, to designate a specific amount for inservice from the $1,720 per teacher which was available to school districts. Beginning in 1973, Florida Statutes required that of the FEFP funds generated in the district for each full-time equivalent (FTE) student, the sum of $5.00 shall be expended for educational training programs. A result of the recommendations of the State Council for Teacher Education Centers in March 1974, was provision for joint funding of teacher education centers by district school boards and universities. School districts must include at least $3.00 per unweighted FTE of the $5.00 per FTE categorized for staff development in Florida Statutes.

Each local TEC council has the responsibility to recommend a budget which is equivalent to at least $3.00 multiplied by the district's unweighted FTE count. On a statewide basis, slightly more than

eight million dollars was budgeted by school districts for inservice education activities from 1982-83 FEFP funds. Florida Statutes also provide for the carry-over of any unexpended inservice funds so that the total amount budgeted in any given year may exceed the actual allocation. Florida Statutes dictate object classifications for which these funds may be expended.

Teacher education centers also receive funding for program activities through the State University System. Center funding in this manner has varied from a beginning $500,000 in 1974-75, to $2,525,451 in 1982-83. These funds are tied to staff positions primarily as salary dollars and secondarily as expense funds. Thus, the TEC's receive the services of personnel of the colleges of education in an amount equivalent to the funds allocated to the university.

Service Agreements are signed by the TEC personnel and university personnel for services to be rendered in TEC's by university professors. Funds are then allocated to the university so that the hours of service requested can be delivered in the TEC program. During the 1978-79 school year, for the first time it became possible, through proviso language of the appropriations bill, for TEC's to establish Service Agreements with private institutions of higher education. Contracts are then entered into by the institution and the Department of Education to provide services to the TEC. Thus, the requirement of the TEC Act that funds be appropriated for the purchase of services from private institutions became and continues to be a reality.

Factors that Influenced this Comprehensive Process, Product and Impact Evaluation

The Teacher Education Center Act of 1973 was scheduled to be repealed on October 1, 1982, subject to legislative review prior to this date. Time constraints made it impossible to conduct a comprehensive evaluation of TEC's. The Oversight Subcommittee of the Committee on Education K-12 designed a open-ended survey and conducted three days of committee hearings to gather data.

The Committee stated that:

The overall purpose of this study was to assist decision-makers in their deliberations over the sunset repeal of the TEC Act of 1973. This study focuses upon the identification of major policy issues needed to be addressed to evaluate TEC's within the larger context of educational staff development and teacher training.

The findings of this study indicated that:

Oral testimony and survey data revealed a lack of concensus and occasional conflict in respondents' perceptions of TEC strengths, concerns and suggestions for improvement. More extensive study is needed to determine if service providers, e.g., university faculty, or service consumers, i.g., certified and non-certified personnel, responses would parallel those in the present study.

Recommendations of this study:

It was recommended that:

1. The sunset repeal of the Teacher Education Center Act should be extended from October 1, 1982, to October 1, 1983, subject to a more extensive legislative review of TEC's within the larger context

of staff development and teacher preparation.

2. A. The Department of Education and Education Standards Commission should conduct a process, product and impact evaluation of TEC's.

   B. The Department of Education shall award joint planning grants to districts and teacher training institutions for planning alternative inservice program delivery models.

3. A Task Force for the Quality Improvement of Teacher Education should be established to develop a set of recommendations and for setting a new direction for quality teacher education in Florida. The Task Force could consider: The career continuum of teachers (Pre-Certification, The New Teacher, and The Experienced Teacher), the status of teacher education in Florida, and the Southern Regional Educational Board's 25-point plan to improve teacher quality, elevate student achievement, and strengthen college and school cooperation.

4. The 1981-82 Legislature should consider amending TEC statutes based upon input from various educational groups and oversight testimony. Amendments should focus upon governments, program scope and evaluation.

Awarding of the Evaluation Contract

The plan for evaluation of Teacher Education Centers in Florida is based upon the recommendations of the Oversight Subcommittee's study on Teacher Education Centers. The main questions to be

asked include:

1. Is the TEC model functional?
2. Does the TEC model produce personnel more able to perform effectively on the job?

3. What revisions in educational staff development laws are needed?

The evaluation should focus upon, but not be limited to, the following areas of emphasis:

1. The quality and extent of participant acquisition of skills, knowledge and/or attitudes demonstrated on the job.

2. The efficacy of collaborative structures and the impact of collective bargaining on the TEC process.

3. The congruence between individuals, school centers and other work group needs assessment findings and inservice programs for district and college of education personnel.

4. The extent and quality of feedback mechanisms between inservice and preservice education.

5. The impact of TEC's upon:

   a. district level certification, recertification and contract status for instructional and supervisory personnel and;

   b. university/college faculty tenure and promotion.

6. The impact of state and local inservice funding policy on TEC efficiency and effectiveness.

7. The relationship between TEC and other inservice delivery models.

The Education Standards Commission of the Florida Department of Education developed and issued the Request for Proposals. Nine contractors submitted prospective proposals for consideration of being awarded the contract.

Evaluation System Design, Inc. (ESDI) of Tallahassee was awarded the contract by the Education Standards Commission and approved by the State Board of Education on August 3, 1982.

Statement of the Problem from the Request for Proposals states that:

> In broad terms the problem is to evaluate Teacher Education Centers throughout the State of Florida. Bidders are expected to design the project in such a way as to facilitate comparison of single-district with multi-district (consortium) Teacher Education Centers; of Centers having a fulltime administrator with those having a part-time administrator; and of Centers bearing responsibility for total staff development (including non-teaching personnel) with those bearing responsibility only for the staff development of teaching personnel.
>
> The contractor will be expected to make a comparative analysis between one or more mandatory Teacher Education Center programs and one or more Center-developed programs with respect to efficiency, participation, and effectiveness. The sample of Teacher Education Centers included in the comparative analysis will be selected jointly by the contractor and the Department.

Evaluation System Design, Inc. restructured the evaluation questions, as set forth by the Oversight Committee, to read:

Governance

1. What is the nature of governance of Teacher Education Centers?

   a. What differences exist among the Centers in governing structures?

   b. How and by whom are Teacher Education Center Council members recommended for appointment?

   c. What is the length of terms for Council members?

   d. Are the defined governing structures actually being implemented?

   e. What is the influence of teacher unions upon the governance and operation of Teacher Education Centers?

Collaboration

2. How is collaboration conducted between Teacher Education Centers and other groups?

   a. What agencies are included in the collaborative efforts?

   b. How extensive are these efforts?

   c. What limitations and barriers are there to collaborative efforts?

   d. How can the collaborative efforts be improved?

Needs Assessment Procedures

3. How are the needs for staff development assessed by TEC's in formulating program offerings?

   a. What procedures, formats and analysis techniques are employed, either formal or informal?

   b. Who implements the procedures and at what levels (district-wide, school-based, program-based, etc.)?

c. What documentation is there of past needs assessments and/or plans for future assessments?

d. How are needs assessments reflected in the master inservice plan?

e. How are TEC needs assessments coordinated with other inservice needs assessments (vocational education, special education)?

TEC Program Offerings

4. What is the nature of the programs delivered through Teacher Education Centers?

a. What types, numbers, and lengths of programs are offered?

b. How well are these programs described?

c. How are potential participants notified of program offerings?

d. To what extent are potential participants knowledgeable of program offerings?

e. To what extent does program delivery reflect use of the needs assessment?

Certification/Recertification

5. What is the relationship of TEC programs to certification and recertification of teachers?

a. To what extent do TEC's offer programs leading to certification or recertification?

b. What indicators of quality exist by which such programs can be evaluated?

c. What is the quality of such programs?

Comparison of TEC's with Other Staff Development Models

6. How does the Teacher Education Center model compare with other staff development models with respect to the following?

a. purpose
b. implementation
c. funding
d. accountability

Funding Allocation and Utilization

7. How are the funds allocated to Teacher Education Centers utilized by school districts and universities?

   a. For school district data, what are the funds by:

      1. object category?

      2. purpose?

         - state-mandated programs
         - locally-mandated programs
         - teacher education center - generated (participant-requested) programs
         - for serving each type of personnel (as classified in the annual statistical report).

   b. For university data, what funds are:

      1. allocated to universities?

      2. consumed by colleges of education?

Impact

8. What is the impact of Teacher Education Centers on:

   - behavior of teachers, administrators, and non-teaching personnel?
   - student learning?
   - pre-service and graduate teacher education programs?
   - tenure and promotion decisions at the college and/or university level?

   How does the impact of the TEC training compare with other training provided in school districts?

Evaluation Approach and Design

The evaluation approach selected by E.S.D.I. is essentially that of process and product evaluation specified in Context, Input, Process and Product, C.I.P.P. Model delineated by Stufflebeam (1971). The Stufflebeam Model is designed to provide systematically collected and organized information for decision-making. The C.I.P.P. Model

is based upon two factors. The first factor forms the basis for program description: means and ends. The second factor distinguishes between the theoretical model and the real state of the program: the intended program versus the actual program. These factors form four program areas for evaluation.

	Intended Program	Actual Program
Program Ends	Context Evaluation	Process Evaluation
Program Means	Input Evaluation	Product or Impact Evaluation

The emphasis of this evaluation design is two-pronged. E.S.D.I. affirms that first, Product/Impact Evaluation will examine the extent to which the intended ends or outcomes of the program are being actualized through the currently operated Teacher Education Centers, and second, Process Evaluation will determine the extent to which the intended processes and means of the program are implemented and identify aspects of the program in need of revision, modification, or improvement.

Methodology

Population Study:

The Product/Impact questions as outlined in the study will address the total complex content of TEC's. Teacher Education Centers affect more than 70,000 teachers and 6,000 other professionals each year. These centers also affect a large number of the 58,000 non-teaching personnel employed in Florida schools. There are more than 1.5 million students in Florida public schools affected daily by all of the personnel in the school system. The 67 districts reported 4,204 inservice components implemented in school year 80-81.

During this period, 5,436,731 hours of inservice staff development were engaged in by instructional personnel, both professional and non-professional. The cost for providing these hours of in-service staff development was $18,243,651.

Collection of Data:

The four strategies employed for data collection will be through analysis of existing data, structured-response questionnaire, and on-site observations and interviews.

Procedure:

. . Analysis of current existing data related to TEC's and development of the seven questionnaires.

. . Computerized literature review.

. . Content analysis to identify within each component of the study, the legislative basis, major issues associated with each question, and any previous recommendations from recent studies.

. . National survey of current legislation in other states related to TEC's or staff development.

. . Selection of six TEC's for on-site visits. Selections were reviewed by the Education Standards Commisson staff and representatives from the Department of Education.

. . Develop seven questionnaires, one for each of the following groups:

1. All TEC Directors
2. All university contact persons
3. Selected members of all TEC Councils

4. Randomly selected teachers in each of the six on-site TEC's
5. Randomly selected support staff in each of the six on-site TEC's
6. Randomly selected administrators in each of the six on-site TEC's
7. Randomly selected university personnel in each of the six on-site TEC's

. . Collect and analyze data related to impact variables including differences between:

1. single-district and multi-district centers.
2. centers with full or part-time administrators.
3. centers serving only teaching personnel and those serving both teaching and non-teaching personnel.

. . Collect and analyze data related to impact variables of TEC's on preservice and graduate teacher education programs. The impact on tenure and promotion decisions at the college and/or university level.

Data analysis will consist of mean ranges and distribution of responses to the structured - response questionnaire. Responses to open-ended questions will be content analyzed to identify the most relevant comments and explanations. Sampling will be conducted to ensure a standard error of measurement no greater than .05.

Final Reports

The purpose of the final report is to document the methodology of the study and present the information and analyses in a format which is useful for decision-making and for future informational purposes. Information collected during the entire evaluation will be organized according to the evaluation questions and presented in narrative, tabular, and graphic form, as appropriate for the types of information collected.

Emerging Trends and Implications of this Study on the Future of Teacher Education Centers in the State of Florida

The study will highlight areas of the Florida TEC concept, as it is being implemented, that will need strengthening or areas that might be considered voids. The solutions and strategies suggested to address these areas that indicate a need for strengthening will probably be indicative of trends for the future of successful TEC's.

Teacher Education Center Consultants offer these comments as possible outcomes.

The study will:

. . reveal a need to clarify and crystalize the relationship of the MIP concept and the TEC concept.

. . indicate that an evaluation design for TEC's inservice program activities that holds the centers more accountable is needed.

. . bring to light the strengths and weaknesses of the collaborative model of the Florida TEC.

. . indicate a need for role clarification of the major collaborative partners of the TEC.

. . reveal a greater impact by the inservice staff development program with full-time directors rather than part-time directors.

. . indicate a need for a greater degree of collaboration between programs at the district level.

. . point up many of the promising practices in inservice staff development.

. . reveal that these three popular inservice practices should be discarded:

1. using preceived needs as major focus for building inservice staff development program.

2. utilizing participants' perceptions of an inservice activity as the major evaluation tool to evaluate that activity.

3. utilizing attendance as criteria for awarding inservice points for successful completion of an inservice activity.

. . confirm the need for more school-based inservice, clinical and other forms of individualized inservice staff development.

Summary

After almost a decade of inservice staff development programs delivered through the Florida Teacher Education Center System (TEC 73), the Legislature mandated in 1982 that the Education Standards Commission and Department of Education conduct an evaluation of TEC's to ascertain the effectiveness of this model.

The purpose of the evaluation of TEC's is to further clarify the purposes of the TEC's, to provide detailed information about the implementation of TEC's, and to evaluate the extent to which the purposes of the TEC's have been achieved. The evaluation activities will yield information which can be used by the Education Standards

Commission in formulating recommendations for changes in the legislation and State Board of Education Rules which govern the existance and operation of TEC's.

The main questions to be addressed include:

1. Is the TEC Model functional for all districts?

2. Does the TEC Model produce personnel more able to perform effectively on the job?

3. What revisions in educational staff development programs are needed?

Evaluation Systems Design, Inc., of Tallahassee is conducting the study. The evaluation questions were identified in the Request for Proposals by the Education Standards Commission. The evaluation approach is basically that of process and product evaluation specified in the C.I.P.P. (Context, Input, Process, Product) model delineated by Stufflebeam (1971). The strategies for performing the evaluation are:

1. collection, analysis, and synthesis of existing data,

2. survey questionnaire, and

3. onsite interviews and observations.

Means, ranges, and distributions of responses will be summarized and presented in the final report. Interview results will be summarized with a content analysis to determine reasons for success or failure of the inservice program in effecting changes in participants' and students' behavior. Analysis will compare results of single versus multi-district centers, centers with full-time versus part-time directors, and teacher-only versus teachers and other personnel centers. And lastly, TEC

consultants generalized on what impact the implications of this study would have on the future of the Teacher Education Centers in the State of Florida.